

**Appln No. 10/527,348**  
**Amdt date December 22, 2006**  
**Reply to Office action of September 25, 2006**

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A seat assembly for a motor vehicle seat, comprising
  - a seat frame which defines a seat surface for a motor vehicle occupant, and
  - a pivotably mounted backrest which is foldable about a pivot axis onto the seat surface, wherein the pivot axis is movable along a predetermined path when the backrest is folded forward onto the seat surface,  
wherein the backrest is additionally connected outside the pivot axis to a frame subassembly in an articulated manner.
2. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the pivot axis is formed by a physical subassembly of the seat assembly.
3. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the pivot axis is formed by a bearing spindle via which the backrest is mounted on a frame subassembly.
4. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the pivot axis is positively guided along the predetermined path when the backrest is folded forward.
5. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 4, wherein the pivot axis is positively guided by a guide device which extends along the predetermined path.
6. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 5, wherein the guide device is formed by a guide slot.
7. (Currently Amended) ~~The seat assembly as claimed in claim 1~~ A seat assembly for a motor vehicle seat, comprising

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- a seat frame which defines a seat surface for a motor vehicle occupant, and  
- a pivotably mounted backrest which is foldable about a pivot axis onto the seat surface,  
wherein the pivot axis is movable along a predetermined path when the backrest is folded  
forward onto the seat surface, wherein the pivot axis is positively guided by a guide element via  
which the pivot axis is connected to a frame subassembly and which is moved when the backrest  
is folded forward.

8. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 7, wherein the guide element is an elongated body.

9. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 7, wherein the guide element is formed by a guide lever.

10. (Cancel)

11. (Currently Amended) The seat assembly as claimed in claim [[10]] 1, wherein the backrest is connected outside the pivot axis to the frame subassembly via a coupling element which extends from the backrest to the frame subassembly and is moved when the backrest is folded forward.

12. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 11, wherein the coupling element is formed by a coupling lever.

13. (Currently Amended) The seat assembly as claimed in claim [[10]] 1, wherein the backrest is connected outside the pivot axis to the frame subassembly via a guide device which guides a section of the backrest when it is folded forward.

14. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 13, wherein the guide device is formed by a guide slot.

15. (Currently Amended) The seat assembly as claimed in claim [[10]] 1, wherein the movement of the pivot axis along the predetermined path when the backrest is folded forward is controlled by the interaction of the backrest with the frame subassembly outside the pivot axis.

16. (Currently Amended) The seat assembly as claimed in claim [[10]] 1, wherein the pivot axis is positively guided along the predetermined path by a guide device stretched out along this path or by a guide element via which the pivot axis is connected to the frame subassembly, and wherein the movement of the pivot axis along the predetermined path is controlled by a coupling element or by a guide device, by which element or by which device the backrest is connected outside the pivot axis to the frame subassembly.

17. (Currently Amended) ~~The seat assembly as claimed in claim 1~~ A seat assembly for a motor vehicle seat, comprising

- a seat frame which defines a seat surface for a motor vehicle occupant, and  
- a pivotably mounted backrest which is foldable about a pivot axis onto the seat surface, wherein the pivot axis is movable along a predetermined path when the backrest is folded forward onto the seat surface, wherein the pivot axis is moved on a closed path when the backrest is folded forward.

18. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 17, wherein the pivot axis is moved from one end to another end of an open curved path and back to the first end of the curved path when the backrest is folded forward.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~The seat assembly as claimed in claim 1~~ A seat assembly for a motor vehicle seat, comprising

- a seat frame which defines a seat surface for a motor vehicle occupant, and  
- a pivotably mounted backrest which is foldable about a pivot axis onto the seat surface, wherein the pivot axis is movable along a predetermined path when the backrest is folded forward onto the seat surface, wherein, when the backrest is folded forward, the pivot axis is

moved, at least during part of the folding movement, along a direction which is essentially opposed to the direction of the folding movement.

20. (Currently Amended) ~~The seat assembly as claimed in claim 1~~ A seat assembly for a motor vehicle seat, comprising

- a seat frame which defines a seat surface for a motor vehicle occupant, and  
- a pivotably mounted backrest which is foldable about a pivot axis onto the seat surface,  
wherein the pivot axis is movable along a predetermined path when the backrest is folded forward onto the seat surface, further comprising means for locking the pivot axis in a position which corresponds to a backrest swung up into a use position, and/or in a position which corresponds to a backrest folded forward onto the seat surface.

21. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 20, wherein the means for locking the pivot axis comprise a locking lever.

22. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an adjusting device to adjust an inclination of the swung-up backrest between various use positions.

23. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 22, further comprising a locking device for locking a previously set inclination of the backrest.

24. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 23, wherein the locking device is formed by a self-locking configuration of the adjusting device or by a brake assigned to the adjusting device.

25. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 23, further comprising a separate locking device, which interacts with the adjusting device.

26. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 25, wherein the locking device comprises a primary locking element which acts on the adjusting device to lock

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the latter, and a secondary locking element with which the primary locking element can be locked in a position in which it acts on the adjusting device.

27. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 26, wherein the secondary locking element disengages the primary locking element from the adjusting device in order to be able to change the inclination of the backrest.

28. (Currently Amended) ~~The seat assembly as claimed in claim 1~~ A seat assembly for a motor vehicle seat, comprising

- a seat frame which defines a seat surface for a motor vehicle occupant, and
- a pivotably mounted backrest which is foldable about a pivot axis onto the seat surface, wherein the pivot axis is movable along a predetermined path when the backrest is folded forward onto the seat surface, wherein
- the pivotably mounted backrest is adjustable in its inclination and has a front side serving to support a seat user's back, and the seat assembly further comprising
- a spring arrangement having at least one elastic element with which the backrest is prestressed elastically such that it is biased to pivot forward and lean with its front side against the seat user's back, the inclination of the backrest being adjustable counter to the action of the spring arrangement by application of force to its front side, and the spring arrangement acting on a gear element which is coupled to the backrest and which is assigned a locking device with which the gear element is lockable in different positions.

29. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein, in the locked state of the locking device, the backrest is locked in its particular position of inclination.

30. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein, in the unlocked state of the locking device, the inclination of the backrest is adjustable.

31. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 30, wherein the backrest is pivotable forward onto the gear element under the action of the spring arrangement.

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32. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 30, wherein the backrest is pivotable rearward counter to the action of the spring arrangement under the action of a compressive force on its front side.

33. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein the gear element is part of a gear arrangement.

34. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 33, wherein the gear arrangement serves for transmitting a torque exerted on the gear element by the spring arrangement.

35. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein the gear element is assigned a coupling by which the backrest is decoupled from the gear element such that the backrest is foldable forward in the direction of the seat surface of the motor vehicle seat without the gear element being moved.

36. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 35, wherein the backrest, when it is decoupled from the gear element, is decoupled from the spring arrangement, so that the spring arrangement does not act on the backrest.

37. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein the gear element is assigned a coupling by which the backrest is decoupled from the gear element such that the backrest is foldable forward in the direction of the seat surface when the gear element is locked by a locking device.

38. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein, in order to decouple the backrest from the gear element, the pivot axis of the backrest, when the backrest is folded forward, is moved along a predetermined path which is designed such that the movement of the pivot axis along the path prevents a reaction of the pivoting movement of the backrest on the gear element.

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39. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 38, wherein the path is formed by a guide device in which the pivot axis is displaceably guided.

40. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 35, wherein the gear element is disengageable from the backrest, so that the gear element is not connected to the backrest.

41. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 39, wherein locking means are provided by which the coupling is lockable in a state in which the gear element is coupled to the backrest.

42. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 39, further comprising locking means by which the coupling is lockable in a state in which the gear element is decoupled from the backrest.

43. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 38, wherein the locking means act on the pivot axis of the backrest and prevent the movement thereof along the path.

44. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 43, wherein the locking means are formed by a lever.

45. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein the locking device of the gear element has a primary locking element and a secondary locking element, the primary locking element, in the locked state, acting on the gear element and the secondary locking element blocking the primary locking element in the locked state.

46. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein the gear element is formed by a toothed segment lever.

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47. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein the spring arrangement has a spring element which acts on the gear element.

48. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 28, wherein the gear element is engagable with the locking device via a toothing.

49. (Previously Presented) The seat assembly as claimed in claim 33 wherein the gear arrangement comprises a lever arrangement, via which the spring engagement is coupled to the backrest.